Compilation of Written Questions on Vaccine Side Effects and Social and Healthcare Workers' Rights

Compilation of Written Questions by Pia Sillanpää (ps)

Submitted to the Speaker of the Parliament of Finland

Written Question KK 15/2025 vp

Pia Sillanpää ps
Written question regarding the assessment and treatment of the work ability of social and healthcare workers suffering from vaccine side effects
To the Speaker of the Parliament

The Communicable Diseases Act was temporarily amended in 2021, and as a result, Section 48a of the Act was in force from January 1 to December 31, 2022. According to the first paragraph of the temporary Section 48a of the Communicable Diseases Act, in social and healthcare services, in all tasks that involve a risk of infection caused by close contact to clients or patients vulnerable to severe consequences of COVID-19 disease, only for a special reason may a person be used who has not demonstrated that they have protection against COVID-19 disease provided by a vaccination or a laboratory-confirmed disease contracted no more than six months earlier.

The goal of the vaccination obligation was to protect the right to life and health of vulnerable clients and patients. By vaccinating healthcare personnel, it was assessed that the spread of the disease to risk groups could be prevented. This obligation led to a large number of social and healthcare workers taking the vaccine to retain their jobs and ensure patient safety. However, it has become evident that some of them have experienced significant side effects from the COVID vaccine, which have affected their health and work ability.

Despite the fact that taking the vaccine was a statutory obligation and its effects on work ability can be significant, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has not prepared national guidelines on how the treatment and work ability assessment of social and healthcare workers who have experienced vaccine side effects should be organized.

Proposal part
Based on the above and referring to Section 27 of the Parliament's Rules of Procedure, I present the following question to be answered by the relevant minister:

Why did the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health not prepare national guidelines on the assessment and treatment of the work ability of social and healthcare workers suffering from vaccine side effects, even though during the COVID pandemic it provided very detailed instructions on the implementation of vaccinations?

In Helsinki, February 12, 2025
Pia Sillanpää ps
https://www.eduskunta.fi/FI/vaski/KasittelytiedotValtiopaivaasia/Sivut/KK_15+2025.aspx

Written Question KK 16/2025 vp

Pia Sillanpää ps
Written question regarding the assessment of the work ability of social and healthcare workers who have suffered vaccine side effects and the securing of their livelihood
To the Speaker of the Parliament

In accordance with the first paragraph of the temporary Section 48a of the Communicable Diseases Act, staff members working in social and healthcare services were required to take the COVID vaccine against COVID-19 disease in 2022. Although the COVID vaccine was claimed to be a voluntarily taken vaccine, it was not. If an employee did not take the COVID vaccine, according to the third paragraph of Section 48a of the Communicable Diseases Act, the employer was primarily required to offer the employee other work in accordance with the employment contract or, if such work was not available, other work suitable for the employee. If suitable or other work was not available, the employer had no obligation to pay wages for the period when work was prevented, that is, as long as the law was in force and the employee had not taken the COVID vaccine.

According to the existing Occupational Safety and Health Act, the purpose of the Act (738/2002) "is to improve the work environment and working conditions to ensure and maintain the work ability of employees, as well as to prevent and combat occupational accidents, occupational diseases, and other physical and mental health hazards, hereinafter health, to employees caused by work and the work environment."

The law thus obligates ensuring the health and safety of the employee at work. Some of the personnel in the social and healthcare sector have suffered a vaccine side effect from the COVID vaccine, as a result of which they have even lost their work ability. Since the vaccination obligation was enacted by law, the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health is emphasized in identifying vaccine side effects of employees, their treatment, and ensuring that the livelihood of those who have lost their work ability due to the vaccine is secured.

Proposal part
Based on the above and referring to Section 27 of the Parliament's Rules of Procedure, I present the following question to be answered by the relevant minister:

Does the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health intend to issue a national policy on how the effects of vaccine side effects on work ability should be assessed and how the livelihood of those who have lost their work ability due to a vaccine side effect will be secured?

In Helsinki, February 12, 2025
Pia Sillanpää ps

Written Question KK 17/2025 vp

Pia Sillanpää ps
Written question regarding the uniform identification and treatment of vaccine side effects across different regions
To the Speaker of the Parliament

Some of the social and healthcare personnel have suffered from harms caused by COVID vaccines due to the vaccination obligation, which have led to a significant deterioration of work ability or its loss. The Occupational Safety and Health Act obligates employers to ensure the health and safety of their employees at work, but at the same time, it is important that vaccine side effects of employees are identified and treated appropriately. This also relates to securing the livelihood of employees, especially when work ability has deteriorated due to a mandatorily taken vaccine.

Different practices, policies, and challenges related to identification in the handling of vaccine side effects may lead to employees being in an unjust and unequal position, depending on which region or organization they work in. In particular, the differing approaches of wellbeing services counties, employers, and insurance institutions may create regional differences and uncertainty for employees about whether harms caused by COVID vaccines are recognized and whether they can be treated with the right methods.

For this reason, it is extremely important that the handling of vaccine side effects is uniform and fair across all wellbeing services counties, so that all employees receive appropriate support and are not placed in an unequal position. This is particularly important in the healthcare sector, where the wellbeing and work ability of employees are central not only for themselves but also for the safety of patients.

Proposal part
Based on the above and referring to Section 27 of the Parliament's Rules of Procedure, I present the following question to be answered by the relevant minister:

How does the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health intend to ensure that wellbeing services counties, employers, and insurance institutions handle vaccine side effects uniformly and fairly without employees being left in an unequal position across regions?

In Helsinki, February 12, 2025
Pia Sillanpää ps
https://www.eduskunta.fi/FI/vaski/KasittelytiedotValtiopaivaasia/Sivut/KK_17+2025.aspx

Written Question KK 18/2025 vp

Pia Sillanpää ps
Written question regarding treatment methods for vaccine side effects caused by COVID vaccines
To the Speaker of the Parliament

Some of the social and healthcare personnel have suffered from harms caused by COVID vaccines due to the vaccination obligation, which have led to a significant deterioration of work ability or its loss. The Occupational Safety and Health Act obligates employers to ensure the health and safety of their employees at work, but at the same time, it is important that vaccine side effects of employees are identified and treated appropriately.

Some of these employees, however, have suffered from serious side effects caused by COVID vaccines, which have led, among other things, to a deterioration of work ability or its loss. The effects of these vaccine side effects can be long-lasting and significantly affect the employees' quality of life, wellbeing, and livelihood. Ensuring the health and safety of employees is a central part of the Occupational Safety and Health Act, and this responsibility extends also to the treatment and rehabilitation of vaccine side effects.

It is the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health to ensure that employees suffering from vaccine side effects receive appropriate and sufficient treatment that helps them recover their work ability, if possible. The treatment and rehabilitation provided must be appropriate and equal for all employees, regardless of the tasks they have worked in or the wellbeing services county area in which they reside. It is important that social and healthcare sector employees are not left outside of treatment and support, but that they are guaranteed the necessary resources and opportunities for recovery.

In addition to this, it is necessary to ensure that the long-term consequences of vaccine side effects are also addressed systematically and that these employees are provided with support and treatment at all stages. The rights of these employees to treatment must not remain unclear or vary by region.

Proposal part
Based on the above and referring to Section 27 of the Parliament's Rules of Procedure, I present the following question to be answered by the relevant minister:

How does the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health intend to ensure that social and healthcare sector employees who have lost their work ability due to vaccine side effects caused by COVID vaccines receive the necessary, appropriate, and sufficient treatment and rehabilitation to support the recovery of their work ability?

In Helsinki, February 12, 2025
Pia Sillanpää ps
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